

**M1/M2 COURSE:**

**Understanding people's views and visions.**

A semiotic and cultural approach of amateur audiovisual productions.

**VIEWING, DESCRIBING, AND COMMENTING  
CONTENT FROM THE COURSE'S VIDEO  
EXCERPTS**

**WORK GUIDE**

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**LUGANO, 23<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2009**

## 1/ Video Excerpts - Overview

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A video corpus was chosen for this course that is intended to make students more attuned to the central role media plays in building, circulating, and transmitting models (representations, patterns, stereotypes) that help us to understand ourselves in a multicultural world.

All selected videos are available on the course's website ("[Online Audiovisual Resources](#)" section) and can be watched at any time.

Selected excerpts (ranging in length from 42 seconds to 28 minutes) include:

1. Two small amateur videos showing touristic places;
2. An edit/montage of old filmic shoots realized by Japanese amateur film writers in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and living in California or Oregon.

Video excerpts are provided by the Audiovisual Research Archives (ARA),<sup>1</sup> an online video library built and managed by ESCoM at the Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme (FMSH) in Paris<sup>2</sup> as well as by You Tube.

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<sup>1</sup> Portal site: <http://www.archivesaudiovisuelles.fr/FR/>

<sup>2</sup> For more info about the ARA Program, visit ARA's portal site: <http://www.archivesaudiovisuelles.fr/EN/> ("Meet ARA" section)

## 2/ Working with videos

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There are five typical steps to working with video excerpts:

1. Repeated viewings of one video excerpt.
2. Actively appropriating content presented in a video excerpt by using a downloadable questionnaire.
3. Doing a short write-up based on a model (also downloadable).
4. In-class presentation and discussion about results and findings.
5. And, lastly, publishing the report on the course website.

Most work on video excerpts will be done between classes, or “at home” but some will also be done during class:

- Students will watch a video excerpt of their choosing “at home” (between classes) and will appropriate the content presented in the excerpt using a downloadable questionnaire. Each student will write a short report based on a model (also downloadable) that will present the results of his/her work on the selected video excerpt.
- Students will present and hold group discussions about their preliminary results in class.

**Note:** working with the selected video corpus is required for earning a final grade/mark.

### 3/ Viewing, describing, and commenting a video excerpt: suggested outline for work

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The majority of work towards a critical appropriation of content presented in a video will be done “at home,” or between classes.

Here are a few suggestions for organizing and orienting the work in a productive and effective way:

1/ **Note:** Do not wait too long before viewing the first excerpt. Comprehension and exploration work may take more time and be more rigorous than the questionnaire for the video excerpt might suggest! Don't forget it was specifically prepared to help you actively and critically appropriate video content.

2/ First, watch the entire video. You might want to take some general notes during this stage. Pay attention to the overall argument presented in the excerpt, not all the minute details!

**Don't forget** that the video player lets you pause, fast-forward, and rewind whenever you want!

**Also don't forget** that the player indicates the **exact place** in the video when you are watching it. It is always highly useful to cross-reference your notes with the exact place in the video (for example, 12 minutes 45 seconds, etc.).

3/ When you watch the video a second time, try to take notes in relationship to the main points in the **questionnaire** intended to help you assimilate the content of the course.

To make note taking easier (and to standardize the process), it is recommended to use a table like the one below:

<b>Section</b> (topic/subject, reference, ...) of the questionnaire being worked on:		
Approx. place in the video (time)	What is being said/shown in the video	My remarks, comments, additional info, etc.
<b>Synopsis</b> (summary and explanations/comments)		
What is being said/shown in the video	My remarks, comments, additional info, etc.	

4/ (if you can work in groups; if not you'll have to do this alone...): get together in a group, talk about your notes, complete the information you collected either by watching the video a third time, or by searching for additional information on the Internet, or by going to a specialized library, etc.

5/ Lastly, write-up your notes using the [guide to write-ups](#).